capacity of the digital gateway exchanges and increase the number of international circuits to meet the growing demand of traffic.

[*Translation*]

Abolition of House Tax

539. SHRI PHOOL CHAND VERMA: Will the Minister of HOME AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government propose to abolish house tax on Janata flats allotted under new pattern scheme, 1979;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS: (SHRI M.M. JACOB): (a) to (c). Residential properties upto the rateable value of Rs. 1, 000/- are exempt from payment of property taxes. At present there is no proposal to abolish property tax on Janata Flats with rateable values above Rs. 1, 000/-.

[*English*]

Kidnapping of the Editor of "Janpath Samachar"

540. SHRI GOVIND CHANDRA MUNDA: Will the Minister of Information and Broadcasting be pleased to state:

(a) whether the editor of the Hindi daily Janpath Samachar has been kidnapped recently in Siliguri; and

(b) if so, the action taken by the Press Council of India in the matter?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF INFORMATION AND BRODCASTING (KUMARI GIRIJA VYAS): (a) The editor of the Hindi daily Janpath Samachar has reportedly been arrested recently in Siliguri.

(b) Press Council of India has not taken any action in the matter as Section 14 (3) of the Press Council Act, 1978 debars it from holding an inquiry into any matter in respect of which, any proceeding is pending in a Court of Law. The Press Council of India has noted that the supreme Court is seized of this matter.

Caste Based Reservation Policy

541. SHRI SHRAVAN KUMAR PATEL: Will the Minister of WELFARE pleased to state:

(a) whether a delegation of Teachers led by the former president of Delhi University Teachers' Association Dr. S.S. Rathi, called on him on October 9, 1991 urging on him to refrain from Caste-based reservation Policy and to take steps to evolve a consensus policy on social justice through a national debate; and

(b) if so, reaction of the Union government thereto?

THE MINISTER OF WELFARE (SHRI SITARAM KESRI): (a) No record is available of any such meeting.

(b) Government believe that social justice has to be promoted in an atmosphere of social harmony and peace. The OM dated 25.9. 91 amending the earlier OM. of 13.8. 90,provides preference to poorer sections among the SEBCs and additional reservation of 10% in civil services and posts under the Government of India for the other Economically backward Sections of the People who are not covered by any existing scheme